

IN RECOGNITION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE VINTONDALE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST AND KNITTERS FROM THE JOHNSTOWN REGION

**HON. MARK S. CRITZ**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. CRITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the members of the Vintondale Veterans of Foreign Wars post, the needle arts club of the Nanty Glo Senior Center, and the In-Stitches Sewing Club of the SS. Gregory and Barnabas Roman Catholic Church for their consorted effort to comfort our wounded troops and their families.

Together, these groups recently provided 100 handcrafted blankets to wounded service members at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda right before the holiday season.

Organized by Joseph Gresko and Charles Sago, two members of Post 5211 VFW, the project was part of a tradition in helping veterans and active duty service members. Mr. Gresko and Mr. Sago requested the assistance of women in the community to knit these comforting gifts for our brave men and women. Marge Younkin, and her fellow members of the needle arts club at the Nanty Glo Senior Center, and Eleanor Chromy, and her fellow members of the In-Stitches Sewing Club of the SS. Gregory and Barnabas Catholic Church, answered the call. With a donation from the church's Altar and Rosary Society and contributions of yarn from other individuals, these women set out to work.

Their efforts not only touched the lives of the service members that received the blankets, but also earned the participants recognition as "Persons of the Week" in the local newspaper, the Johnstown Tribune-Democrat, for their generosity and care. Performing this act of kindness for our brave men and women was not about receiving accolades for these individuals. As Mr. Sago has stated, these gifts are reminders that there are people these soldiers never knew who truly appreciate what they have done.

Upon delivering the blankets to our wounded service members, I let them know that these gifts were a token of our appreciation for the service and sacrifice they have made, and continue to make, on behalf of a grateful nation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the individuals in the Johnstown community who generously dedicated their time, talent, and heart for this worthy project.

INSTRUCTING CERTAIN COMMITTEES TO REPORT LEGISLATION REPLACING THE JOB-KILLING HEALTH CARE LAW

SPEECH OF

**HON. CORRINE BROWN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 20, 2011*

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to House Resolution 9, which instructs authorizing committees to de-

velop legislation replacing existing healthcare laws. While I applaud the majority's intention to finally present their own comprehensive solutions to the health care crisis in this country, I note that they don't need a resolution by the entire House to do so. Committees can develop legislation on their own at any time. Moreover, I reject the idea that the Patients Protection and Affordable Care Act must be "replaced." The PPACA represents a century of effort by people of all political persuasions to give people the peace of mind that comes from knowing they have access to affordable care. No law is ever perfect. Certainly, all legislation can all be improved and I welcome the opportunity to further the progress made by the 111th Congress on health care reform.

Furthermore, current law meets most, if not all, of the goals identified in today's resolution. Since health care reform passed, the economy has grown, more than a million jobs have been created and thousands of small businesses have used tax credits to begin offering employees coverage for the first time. In order to foster competition and choice, the Department of Health and Human Services recently established a website where people can compare policies and when the exchanges launch in 2014, individuals and small businesses will select from a wide range of carriers competing for their business. Patients now have the right to choose their own primary care physician and women don't have to ask permission to see an obstetrician. Insurance carriers cannot arbitrarily deny care and patients have a robust right to repeal when company bureaucrats override doctors. Children cannot be denied coverage for pre-existing conditions and soon all Americans will enjoy that protection.

When PPACA is fully implemented, 32 million people will have coverage who never had it before, millions more will be able to afford coverage more easily, and seniors will not pay so dearly for prescription drugs. All of these actions can be done while extending Medicare solvency by twelve years by reducing waste, fraud and abuse and while slashing the deficit by \$1.4 trillion over the next twenty years.

The Republican plan introduced in the House last session would cover just 3 million more Americans by 2019—leaving 51 million Americans uninsured in 2019. That plan reduced the deficit by \$68 billion over the next 10 years—far less than the law we passed—and offered none of the cost savings and consumer protections that make health care reform work for all Americans. I sincerely hope Republicans offer more substantial solutions this session.

Finally, one goal of today's resolution that I must take issue with is the provision regarding abortion. Nothing in the PPACA allows for taxpayer funded abortions and I would strenuously object to any new laws that further restricted a woman's right to choose or allow medical professionals to deny legitimate services based on their own religious beliefs. There is no reason why the healthcare options for women—participating in insurance exchanges should be any different than they are for women who can afford coverage on their own.

LET'S HELP ALL AMERICANS ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM OF HOMEOWNERSHIP

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced the Homebuyer Tax Credit Renewal Act of 2011 (H.R. 330), which will reinstate both the \$8000 first-time homebuyer credit and the \$6500 long-time homebuyer credit for a period of 1 year.

According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), 479,622 homebuyers claimed the credit in 2009. While the numbers for 2010 are not yet available, there is no doubt that the tax credit was instrumental in helping many first-time buyers achieve the American dream of homeownership by increasing down-payments and lowering monthly mortgage payments.

Homeownership is one of the best ways for working Americans to accumulate assets for retirement and to ensure neighborhoods are stable and well-maintained. Homeowners are also able to benefit from tax deductions like the mortgage interest and property tax deductions.

Homeownership also benefits children in numerous ways. Children of homeowners score better on academic tests, graduate at a higher rate, have fewer behavioral problems, and enjoy a better social environment. Living in an owned home is also a predictor of future success, as homeowners' children earn more than renters' children, are less likely to be on welfare, and are more likely to become homeowners themselves.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in co-sponsoring this important legislation

WE MUST DEBATE ABOUT VIOLENCE IN OUR SOCIETY

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, our Nation has long labored under a stigma of violence.

An estimated one in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. 30% of all students through grade six will experience bullying, either as victims or perpetrators.

Domestic violence, spousal abuse, child abuse, violence in our schools, gang violence, racial violence and violence against those we perceive to be different than us remain prevalent.

So what should we do?

What if we had an organized approach to dealing with violence in our society? What if we treated violence as phenomenon that could be addressed, diminished and resolved?

We have always been told that war is inevitable. That violence is inevitable.

We must challenge these notions. Government has a role in creating an organized approach to addressing violence and to create structures to lessen violence and its impact on our lives.

We cannot wait for more tragic events to occur to force us to examine issues of violence here at home.

There is no time like the present to begin, again, the debate about violence in our society. I intend to facilitate this debate with a proposal I will soon bring forward.

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JUSTICE FOR LAULI'I

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced a private bill (H.R. 354) on behalf of a remarkable young man, Lauli'i Matu'u.

Lauli'i was born deaf and was abandoned by his birth-family in Western Samoa. Lauli'i lived on the streets until age 10 when Greg Lewis, a U.S. citizen, took him in, taught him sign language, and cared for his medical needs. In 1992, Mr. Lewis was appointed as legal guardian to Lauli'i, but it took 14 years before Greg was finally able to bring Lauli'i to the U.S. Lauli'i is in danger of being deported because his humanitarian visa has expired. Lauli'i has no family or ties to Western Samoa, deporting Lauli'i would be a travesty of justice! My bill will grant Lauli'i permanent U.S. residence.

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REPEALING THE JOB-KILLING  
HEALTH CARE LAW ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. JEFF FLAKE**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 2, legislation repealing the massive health care law passed last year.

Obamacare creates an unfunded mandate for states that took federal stimulus funds for Medicaid.

This unfunded mandate will cost states like Arizona hundreds of millions of dollars.

It also ties their hands from changing their Medicaid programs to prevent them from becoming unaffordable.

States must be allowed to tailor their programs as they see fit in order to ensure their long-term sustainability.

There are claims that repealing Obamacare would lead to massive deficits because it is supposedly paid for, but I would like to point out one item that was intended to raise revenues in order to help pay for the health care law that is already facing repeal.

The healthcare bill includes a requirement that small businesses file a report every time they spend more than \$600.

This filing requirement went into effect at the end of last year and I am among a considerable bipartisan effort seeking to repeal it.

Time and time again, we pass a law that is supposedly paid for . . . only to find out that the supposed pay-fors aren't worth the paper on which they were written.

Sadly, when all of the budget gimmicks and fiscal hijinx are accounted for, provisions like these in Obamacare aren't paid for at all.

In fact, the House Budget Committee Chairman recently noted that the true cost of Obamacare to taxpayers is more than \$700 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I agree that something must be done about the rising costs of health care, but Obamacare is not the answer.

This is a bad law: we need to just start over and enact healthcare reforms that improve quality and control costs.

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TRIBUTE TO STEVE HAMANN, EL  
CAJON 2010 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

**HON. DUNCAN HUNTER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, it's with a profound sense of appreciation and respect that I rise today to acknowledge the contribution of Steve Hamann to the San Diego community. Steve was recently named 2010 Citizen of the Year for the city of El Cajon, which I am proud to represent in Congress. Each of the candidates in the running for Citizen of the Year would have been an excellent choice, but Steve's tireless work and charity on behalf of so many others puts him in a class by himself.

Anyone who knows Steve understands that his purpose is not derived from self-motivation. His commitment to helping others showcases his good nature and moral character, demonstrated through more than 16 years of charity work, where he raised millions of dollars for numerous causes. All of it on donated time and without compensation—a mark of true dedication and purpose.

Such an extraordinary level of involvement is why Steven is known around East County San Diego as the "Auctioneer Extraordinaire." He has spent countless hours hosting events each year—more than 80 in one year, in fact—and, thankfully for all us, he shows no sign of slowing down anytime soon. A member of the Rotary Club of El Cajon, Steve embodies the Rotarian motto of "Service above Self."

The list of organizations Steve lends his time and efforts to support is long, but certainly worth noting. He is well known for his work with the Boys and Girls Clubs of East County, Stoney's Kids, St. Madeleine Sophie's Center, the East County Salvation Army, The East County Chamber of Commerce, the El Cajon Community Development Center, the El Cajon Elks Lodge, the Heartland Boy Scouts, the Cajon Valley Union School District, the Grossmont Union High School District, the Grossmont Cuyamaca College District, the Mother Goose Parade, the Home of Guiding Hands, the El Cajon Recreation Department, the East County YMCA, the Grossmont Hospital Foundation and the Olaf Wieghorst Museum.

Aside from his sterling reputation, I got to better know Steve as the moderator for the East County Chamber of Commerce's Congressional Debates. The one thing about Steve in this setting is that he has always been as firm as he has been fair, demonstrating his objectivity while asking tough questions that help better inform community residents about their choices entering election season. Steve is also Editor-in-Chief for the East County Herald newspaper, where he focuses on promoting most of El Cajon's events and featuring those events in quality photo series. This is just one more service to the community that Steve provides.

Many San Diegans, as do most Americans, often wonder if they are making a difference in their communities or do enough to help influence the lives of others. Steve is a good example of someone who should never have to wonder whether they are making an impact. The evidence is in his work, hours dedicated and results. Steve serves as an excellent example to others too, reminding us all that a little time and attention to helping others goes a very long way.

I cannot say enough about Steve. He is an ambassador for our community and, without question, makes El Cajon a better place for each one of its residents. I want to thank Steve for his work and congratulate him on the Citizen of the Year award. His wife of 32 years, Lorraine, and his children Sarah and Ben, undoubtedly share Steve's enthusiasm and good nature. I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to them too.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Steve Hamann and wishing him continued success in all future endeavors. The El Cajon community and our nation benefit from Steve's leadership, as well as others who commit their lives to causes bigger than themselves.

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FAIR TAXES FOR SENIORS

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced the Fair Taxes for Seniors Act (H.R. 331), which will provide a one-time increase in the capital gains tax exemption on the sale of a home for citizens who are 50 years of age or older. Passing this bill will give many seniors the additional money they need for nursing home care, medical costs, and other retirement expenses.

The Fair Taxes for Seniors Act doubles the current exemption by providing a one-time increase to \$500,000 for a single person and \$1 million for a couple that can be excluded from the sale of a principal residence for taxpayers who have reached the age of 50. Because they will be able to keep more, an added benefit is that family members and perhaps the government will be relieved of the burden of caring for these individuals as they grow older.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in co-sponsoring this important legislation.

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WILLIE O. STEAM TRIBUTE

**HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON**

COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 24, 2011*

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the life and service of Willie O. Steam, of Denver, Colorado. Patrolman Steam was killed in the line of duty in 1921 and was one of a few black police officers of his time.

Patrolman Steam, employed under the administration of Chief H.R. Williams, was a Special Policeman who worked full-time as a night watchman at City Hall. The week prior to his murder Patrolman Steam enforced an ordinance that prohibited illegal dances. Steam's